



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE TARIFF ON ART.

THE tariff excitement that a short time ago prevailed in artistic circles has quite subsided, some of the free traders feeling satisfied that the efforts they have already made are sufficient for the occasion, and others fearing that if the question is again brought before Congress, that body will not brook the semi-official threats of retaliation that have come from the other side of the water. Many consider that if the tariff is to be one for revenue only, the high-priced pictures, in which only very rich men can indulge, should pay the same duty as their other foreign-made luxuries.

The artists who favor some kind of a duty,—who greatly outnumber the free traders—are content to take no action, feeling that Congress has a pretty just appreciation of the whole business and can perceive the flimsiness of the arguments of that extraordinary coalition—American collectors who seldom or never buy an American picture; American artists (young men generally), and their enemies the French and German picture dealers. In case of a victory, the weakest party in this triple alliance certainly will not get the benefits it expects.

I have talked with many of the artists and find that very few of either party have given the subject much thought;—most of those who signed the memorial for the abolition of all duties on Art works, did so under a general impression that there ought to be no impediments to the importation of fine works of art; they would as readily have signed a petition for a moderate specific duty had it been first presented to them.

Indeed, almost all of the resident artists meet on this common ground; viz.,—they welcome the introduction of all fine works of art, but have no sympathy for the inferior combinations of pigment and canvas that are manufactured solely for the profit of a few foreign dealers. But the question of the means by which this common end can be best accomplished is what divides the artists into two parties.

It is not just that a resident of this country, who follows Art as a profession, should be called upon by virtue of his vocation to bear any burdens not equally imposed upon his fellow residents, who are engaged in like honorable employments. Yet this is exactly what the advocates for "free art" are asking.

In consequence of the protection given to all other industries, the expenses of a resident artist, while producing a work of a certain degree of excellence, are at least fifty per cent higher than they would be if he were living in Europe. It follows, therefore, that as long as these conditions obtain, there can be an equal competition between the resident and the non-resident artist only when there is a duty upon the works of the latter that is equal to the difference in the cost of pro-

duction in the two continents—in accordance with Mr. Hewitt's idea.

It has been urged as a reason for the removal of the duty upon Art works, that they are educational;—if that is an honest reason, why not begin with books—which are much more direct educational factors than works of art? Then there are artistic works in metal, wood, pottery, textile fabrics, etc., that are of very great value in cultivating the taste of the public;—why continue to tax these productions?

But the people at large take another view of the matter; why should any discrimination be made in favor of the few rich men who can well afford to pay a duty on the high-priced pictures they buy as luxuries, while they—the people—are heavily taxed upon the hardly-gotten necessities of life?

This much as a matter of business justice; but most of the artists have a certain amount of sentiment in them, and are perfectly willing to make a large concession of their rights, for the sake of facilitating the importation of works that are calculated to aid in the art development of the country; most of them think that this can be best accomplished by a specific duty that would be light upon works of any merit, and would become merely nominal as the pictures increased in excellence.

Any *ad valorem* duty is a premium for fraud, and will be taken advantage of by dishonest importers (who run little or no risk of detection), as there is no standard of values for works of art, and it is impossible for any third person to know the prices that may have been paid for them in Europe,—such prices being known only to the buyer and seller.

The American artist wants no special favors from the Government, but only the same treatment that is given to all other citizens. If we are to have free trade, let it be either free trade upon the necessities of life, or free trade all around.

Y. Z.

THE ART LOAN ASSOCIATION, of Detroit, a few days ago, turned over to the PERMANENT ART ASSOCIATION, of Detroit, all its assets, consisting of cash, paintings and records, on condition that as soon as the latter Association shall have been incorporated under the laws of Michigan, such assets shall be used for the public good in creating and developing a taste for the Fine Arts. In connection with this, a movement made to secure funds for the purchase of a site for a permanent building for a "Detroit Museum of Art," resulted in the receipt of subscriptions to the amount of forty thousand dollars, of which Senator Palmer contributed ten thousand. The accomplishment of this most excellent result for Detroit was due mainly to the energy of Mr. W. H. Brearley, Chairman of the late very successful Loan Exhibition.